

ANTIDOTE
TO
REV. H. J. VAN DYKE'S
PRO-SLAVERY DISCOURSE,

BY
REV. WM. H. BOOLE.

"AMERICAN SLAVERY HAS NO FOUNDATION IN THE SCRIPTURES."

DELIVERED IN THE
M. E. CHURCH, MOUNT VERNON, NEW YORK,
On Sunday, January 13, 1861.

NEW YORK:
EDMUND JONES & CO., PRINTERS AND STATIONERS,
No. 26 JOHN STREET.
1861.

May 16 1875 of bi 5 from Rome
in Bartlett 11 524

ANTIDOTE
TO
REV. H. J. VAN DYKE'S
PRO-SLAVERY DISCOURSE,

BY
REV. WM. H. BOOLE. ✓

“AMERICAN SLAVERY HAS NO FOUNDATION IN THE SCRIPTURES.”

27-5
DELIVERED IN THE

M. E. CHURCH, MOUNT VERNON, NEW YORK,

On Sunday, January 13, 1861.



NEW YORK:
EDMUND JONES & CO., PRINTERS AND STATIONERS,
No. 26 JOHN STREET.
1861.

122

Vol 45

122

SERMON.

Is. v : 20. "Woe unto them that call evil good : (Heb. : that say concerning evil, it is good :) that put darkness for light, and light for darkness ; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter."

SURELY, the condemnation of the text was never more fully deserved by any, than by those "blind leaders of the blind," who, in this age and day of Gospel light and influence, have lifted up their voice, in the pulpit of the church of God, to defend, and attempt to cover with the sanction of divine enactments, that which is the condensation of barbarism, the only remaining relic and last vestige of an odious institution, founded in iniquity and perpetuated in fraud, and an utter disregard of all the holy claims of humanity—American slavery !

We propose to discuss the sermon of the Rev. Henry J. Van Dyke, of Brooklyn, preached in his church on Sabbath evening, December 9th last, 1860, on "The Character and Influence of Abolitionism," in which Slavery—American slavery—is lauded as a divine institution, and lifted to the high position of an appointed agency in the salvation of the human race.

This we deny. And we accept the "sublime challenge" and appeal against him, "to the law and the testimony." "We are not blind devotees, to bow down to the dictation of any man. We acknowledge in this place but one standard of morals, but one authoritative and infallible rule of faith and practice—the Bible." From that book of God, wherein we are taught the precept of the Golden Rule, "As ye would have others do to you, do ye even so to them," that "this is acceptable unto God," "to break the bands of the oppressed," the Rev. Mr. Van Dyke attempts to draw his proofs in defense of a vile system of slavery, "the sum of all villanies." Randolph, himself a slaveholder, truly said : "I envy not the head nor the

heart of that man that seeks to defend slavery from the word of God”

I have prepared a single proposition on the subject of slavery, to maintain and defend with the word of God, “which is the sword of the Spirit.”

The last three theses of Mr. Van Dyke’s discourse, “Abolitionism leads by logical process to infidelity,” &c., &c., I summarily dispose of by a simple and absolute denial of their relevancy and of the statements therein contained ; they are a web of misrepresentations unworthy the subject and the position of their author.

I shall confine myself to the Scripture argument, the first proposition of the discourse, “Abolitionism has no foundation in the scriptures.”

The reverse of this I hold to maintain, American slavery has no foundation in the Scriptures.

Mr. Van Dyke first defines the term “Abolitionist.” “What is an Abolitionist? He is one who believes that slaveholding is a sin, and therefore ought to be abolished. This is the fundamental, the characteristic, the essential characteristic of Abolitionism, that slaveholding is sin, a crime in the sight of God. He must believe that slaveholding is morally wrong.”

This we accept, after simply substituting the term “slavery” for “slaveholding.” We prefer striking at the *root* of the tree. Slaveholding is its branch and fruit. And in this discussion Mr. Van Dyke uses the word “slaveholding” as a gloss to hide the true intent of Scripture, and to avoid the full bearing of facts which make against his argument.

Under the head of his first thesis, “Abolitionism has no foundation in the Scriptures,” Mr. Van Dyke has a cunningly devised argument, in which, by a species of legerdemain, he wraps the garments of ancient divine ordinances around *all* slavery, including Southern slaveholding, and thus dressed in borrowed robes to hide its deformity, baptizes it as “an important and necessary process in their (the slaves’) transition from heathenism to Christianity.”

Purposely keeping wide of a discussion on the causes, nature, and practical workings of Slavery under the Mosaic dispensation, he assumes that God gave commandments sanctioning and governing *that*, and as he could "never anywhere countenance that which is morally wrong," therefore it follows that slavery is right *now*. And further, as there is no prohibition of it in the New Testament, it was therefore "intended to be continued," and the conclusion is, it is "*continued*" in Southern slavery.

This may be an ingenious defense, but it does not include a statement of the *truth*. It is putting darkness for light. There are points of difference between Jewish bondage and American slavery, which put these systems as wide apart as heaven and earth. Slavery among the Jews was a mitigation of the sentence of extermination against the heathen nations that had "filled up the cup of their iniquity" and called down upon them the wrath of Almighty God. These people were captives of war, reduced to a condition of national servitude, completely in the power of their captors.

No people are so disposed to cruelty, and the abuse of power, especially when suddenly acquired, as those that have themselves suffered in vassalage. The history of every successful revolution made by the lower classes, the ignorant and degraded of a nation, is a commentary upon this truth.

Now we know, from the divine records, that the Israelites, just taken by a "strong arm," from a grinding and most degrading slavery of four hundred years' duration, were ignorant, degraded, hard of understanding, willful and rebellious, a hard-hearted and stiff-necked race.

This is the inspired testimony concerning this people through generations. The curb and bit of the severest enactments and penalties, issued by Jehovah amid thunders and lightnings, were necessary to their restraint. The nation of the Jews suddenly found themselves in possession of the long-sought land of promise. Successful in every battle, by the power of God, from being a nation despised, they were rulers over kings and many nations.

To prevent the abuse of this power, which was given the Jews for *the good of the world* as much as for their own profit and glory, they were forbidden by divine enactments to exercise the right claimed by all conquerors of forcibly reducing to abject and uncompensated slavery their captives. God therefore enacted, "Both your bondmen and bondmaids, which thou shalt have, shall be of the heathen that are round about you. Of them shall ye *buy* bondmen and bondmaids" (they shall not be taken by force and for naught because ye have conquered them). "He that stealeth a man shall surely be put to death."

Now, this was a step in advance in civilization and morals, of the laws and customs of those barbarous times concerning the disposition of the inhabitants of conquered countries.

It is a matter of history that the victors had full power of life and death over their captives, could subject them to punishment and violence and abuse of authority without "let or hindrance." By this enactment all this abuse by the Jews was prohibited and restrained. Such was the intention of this prohibition. Mr. Van Dyke says that by this enactment slavery was "anticipated." Yes, *slavery by the fate of war*, in which the Jews, at command of God, were soon to engage for the extermination of heathen nations, whose "cup of iniquity" was full to the brim, but which were, in part, by the disobedience of the Israelites, permitted to remain among them, and became "thorns in their flesh." And this enactment "anticipated" also the abuse of acquired power, by their ignorant, stiff-necked, and hard-hearted Israelitish conquerors.

This divine enactment did not "anticipate" slavery by fraud, man-stealing, the selling of spurious offspring, the unjust appropriation of the fruits of unacknowledged and brutally repudiated marriage ties. Such by nature and growth is American slavery. And for such, no provision has been made by divine authority, in Old or New Testament, save to punish the willful and wicked participators in such iniquities.

Our minds are not to be blinded by any jingle of words, to the fact that the subject treated of in this whole discussion, to

be proved or disproved from the word of God, is *Southern negro slavery*, none other. If it can be shown that these oracles, to whose authority we reverently bow, do "sanction" *such a system of bondage*, well ; if not, "woe to them that pervert the right ways of the Lord, and put darkness for light, and say of evil, it is good." Under this institution of mercy, Hebrew slavery, established for the moral education of the people of God, and for the improvement of the condition of the heathen around them, there was a recognition and respect of the rights of the marriage relation among the bondmen. Children were not separated from parents and sold apart. The chastity of the bondmaid was held sacred; if she was humbled by her master, he was forbidden to send her away or to sell her. Also, they were to be the inheritance of their children after them, held an entailed property. It was not a promiscuous and unrestrained traffic.

Slavery is the normal condition of no part of our race. "God has made of *one blood all* nations that dwell upon the earth." He is no respecter of persons. The evil passions of men have produced all the evil results of oppression, fraud and violence, which we behold scattered through the earth.

Freedom is the primitive condition of man, and towards this *all good causes tend*. Ancient slavery, including Jewish, was the fruit of war, and grew out of the subjugation of the people of one nation to those of another. It was a barbarism. So is war itself, which is contrary to the principles of righteousness, underlying *all* the dispensations which together form the redemption scheme of the world's salvation.

Slavery followed in the wake of war, as a natural result, and in the case of the Jews, the abuse of the appropriation of the spoils of victory, was prevented by the wise and beneficent restriction, "Ye shall *buy* your bondmen and bondmaids of the heathen that are round about you." Here is a positive act forbidding the exercise of the then universally acknowledged right of the conqueror to his captives. This was "*bringing good out of evil.*" A subsequent reversion of the condition of

those captive nations was at once followed by a complete change in their relations towards their masters. Success in war was the jubilee of emancipation, and the captives returned to their normal state of freedom. And no divine ordinance was enacted covering the assumed right of the master to recover his fugitive slave in such case. Self-emancipation by such recognized means was the right of the slave. If he could gain his liberty, "he was (as Paul teaches) to use it rather." "Against such there was no law." And the Almighty established the precedent by evading the provisions and authority of the "unconstitutional" "fugitive slave law" of the Egyptians, and bringing a whole nation out of bondage "with a high hand," after commanding the slaves to "borrow" all the jewels they could of their masters, and keep possession as part payment of arrearages of four hundred years' wages of servitude. As a further preventive to the undue exercise of the master's authority, it was provided that the slave that had escaped from his master was not to be returned, but permitted to dwell in the land to which he had escaped wheresoever he chose.

They were also to be instructed in the true religion, taught to observe the commandments of the Lord, and in every respect, physical, mental and moral, were to be trained into an improved condition of civilization. Such was, in brief, the origin, nature, characteristics, and practical workings of Jewish bondage.

And now I throw down the gauntlet, and challenge the proof from this divine record, that the "Lord God, true and righteous," ever established, sanctioned, anticipated, provided for, justified, or excused slaveholding of Southern kind, originating in unlawful incursions into the territory of peaceable, inoffensive, and weak nations, occupying no "promised land" given by covenant of God to the invaders, guilty of no depredations upon the property of their assailants, *not* having filled up the cup of their iniquity, and been given over to a decree of extermination. Forcibly dragging the inhabitants, without respect of sex or condition, from their native land; crowding the manacled

and helpless masses into the narrow "between-decks" of the pirate slaver, there to endure all the written and unwritten horrors of the purgatory of the "middle passage" on their voyage to Columbia's fair land of—*liberty!*

Mr. Van Dyke asks, Where is "the prohibition of slavery in the Bible"? Here it is, in both Old and New Testaments: "THOU SHALT NOT STEAL," "He that stealeth a man, and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, shall surely be put to DEATH." Paul classes "man-stealers with murderers of fathers, murderers of mothers," with the most abominable of sinners. I pin down all opposers to this. No quibbling, no evasion, meet the question. Do not the whole Scriptures, old and new, in letter and in spirit strike the death-blow of God's anathema at this, the *root and growth* of American slavery?

I use the language of Mr. Van Dyke, changing but a word or two, to suit the better use of it: "When men tell me that slaveholding is" not "sin, in the simplicity of my faith in the Holy Scriptures, I point to this sacred record, and tell them, in all candor, as my text does, that their teaching blasphemes the name of God and his doctrine." Further, where is the act sanctioning the *means* whereby this system is perpetuated? The repudiation of the tender, sacred, heaven-instituted, Christ-honored bonds of the marriage relation? Of the refusal to parents of their own offspring? The right to tear the moaning child from its robbed and shrieking mother, and selling it to one, the father to another, and the mother to a third? Where is the divine act which says that "the slave has no rights which the white master is bound to respect?" The Scripture sanction for holding as a slave, and selling as such, the illegitimate offspring of the white master? For the establishment of slave nurseries for the production and growth of human "chattels" to supply the markets left empty by failures in the speedy returns of foreign importation by pirate-slavers?

Where is there a place in the Bible for the Southern auction block, where the handsome, full developed form of the fair slave girl, whose long wavy hair, adorning her brow and finely

chiselled features, sculptured in the cream-colored flesh of unmistakable Anglo-Saxon pedigree, speaks her a blood-relation of her inhuman owner, is put up to be sold to the highest bidder, among the eagerly betting gentlemen of the crowd, for profit and dishonor? These are all parts of the system of American slavery—integral parts. These are its origin, its nature, its characteristics.

These are not excrescences which protrude upon a healthy body; they are *the bone and flesh and beating heart of the system*. They are not the filthy rags covering a fair form, hiding for the while its beauty, but which, when stripped and washed, present to the eye the features of loveliness beneath. They are the *naked outlines* of a body deformed in every part, *a mass of rottenness from head to foot, from bone to skin*.

Mr. Van Dyke says: "It is often said that if the Bible does sanction slavery, it does not sanction American slavery. I answer, neither does it sanction the system of American marriage, if by system is meant every thing connected with the practical workings of the relation."

Now all this is sophistry, an evading of the point, the putting *one* thing in the place of *another* thing, by a false definition and play upon a word. "If by the word *system* is meant *every thing* connected with the practical workings of the two relations," says Mr. Van Dyke, the word "system" means no such thing. "System" is the integral, the fundamental parts of a whole plan or scheme, so connected as to make a chain of mutual dependencies. Now what are the integral parts of American marriage? (This word "American" is a gloss; marriage among us is not American or English, 'tis Christian.)

1st. The recognition of the sacredness of the relation. 2d. The imposition of vows by which the contracting parties covenant to live together "after *God's ordinance*, in the holy bands of matrimony." 3d. The performance of suitable ceremonies involving the taking of the above solemn obligation by the contracting parties, before a legally authorized minister of the law, or of the Gospel. This system is *not* "full of evil and

iniquity." Mr. Van Dyke says that these are parts of the "system:" "husbands beat and poison their wives," "multitudes of parents suffer their children to grow up in filth and ignorance," and "divorce cases are enough to poison the fountains of virtue in every family where they are read." Now Mr. Van Dyke never read "definitions," or he knows that all these things are forbidden by the covenant of marriage, and by the laws of every Christian state, and are no part of the system whatever. But now what are the integral, essential parts of the "system" of American slavery—fundamental parts holding it together?

Man-stealing is its base, its lowest stratum, its corner-stone. This is the quarry from whence the whole material for the superstructure was broken out. Without this "base" there is no foundation to build upon; without the material thus furnished, there would have been no such "institution" raised. Here then is one essential part. Another necessary link is the utter disregard of the marriage ties, giving the right to separate and sell apart parents and children. The acknowledgment of the rights of that relation, as they are acknowledged here amongst us, where Mr. Van Dyke says marriage is "full of iniquity and evil," would ruin the whole fabric of slavery in fifty years. Other essential parts are slave-nurseries and the auction block. And to show that all these are *parts of the system*, and not *abuses* of its practical workings, we say *there is no law nor healthy prevailing sentiment in the Southern States against any of these things*.

National law prohibits the slave-trade, it is true, but the South has opened it with a vigor which shows *it* considers *that* law no part of a Southern code or policy.

Mr. Van Dyke says, that he "believes slavery to be an *important* and *necessary* process in their (the slaves') transition from heathenism to Christianity." Remember, the reverend gentleman means *Southern* slavery. I don't want to get the argument off *that* track. And, now, will a professed Christian man lay all the burden of this "sum of villanies" upon the divine

framing of the redemption scheme of mankind? Say, that "an important and *necessary* process in that scheme is the *stealing of men, women, and children?* The piratical slave-trade, adultery, fornication, and the dissolution of the marriage ties?

Will he dare to tell the frowning world that a "*necessary* process" in God's purposes is the protection of this unparalleled institution of fraud, in the circumscribed locality and narrow borders of a small Southern confederacy, against the united protest of all the Christian nations, that unanimously declare that the doctrine of God is blasphemed, by a threatened spread of the evil?

That this moral monstrosity, *conceived in sin, shapen in iniquity, and untimely born from the womb of hell*, IS A CHILD OF GOD'S PROVIDENCE? Does he intend to "slanderously report" of God, "let us do evil that good may come," "whose damnation is just"?

That God can bring good out of evil, we believe; but "evil" is not by such results changed into "good;" its bad nature remains unaltered. God brings good out of evil by either neutralizing or overcoming it—not by calling evil "good."

Mr. Van Dyke *knows* that there is not in the whole system, its origin or nature, the *slightest shading of philanthropy or Christianity*. The slave-trade was established and is carried on for sordid profit, filthy lucre—nothing else. How many missionaries have devoted themselves to the calling? Who buys the slaves in the markets? Christian societies, to instruct them in the rudiments of God's gospel? No; they are bought for work, for profit—nothing more. Who ever knew of a slave in the South educated for the purpose of raising him to the dignity of his manhood? Does not the law of the South forbid the teaching of a slave to read? Is he taught that he is a *man* by creation and divine appointment, and should seek to rise to the attainment of such estate?

'Tis true that some masters do permit their slaves to hear a *part* of the gospel preached from the lips of ministers who

favor the system of slavery. But what an apology for a *christianizing* mission! They are not permitted to learn to read the word of God for themselves, they are never sent back to Ethiopia with the glad tidings of Christ. They remain in bondage, subject exclusively to the control of their masters, none of whom has ever heard a "divine call" to send his slave, as a missionary, to Africa, or elsewhere, nor acknowledged any higher position for him than that of "chattel."

Mr. Van Dyke must *know* that this whole system, in origin, nature, and in the bias of the laws of Southern States sustaining it, together with the practical workings of it, *are all opposed to the spirit and spread of Christianity*, and the only way in which he can prove satisfactorily that it is "an important and necessary process, in their transition from heathenism to Christianity," is to show by the word of God that it is the Lord's will and decree *that Africa shall empty all her inhabitants into the Southern States through the missionary efforts of the slave-traders*. Until then, he is no authority for me nor you.

The reverend gentleman has ingeniously joined together in his argument the Old and New Testament records, and by raising the former to the glory of the latter, he proposes that we receive it as equal in authority with the New Testament—indeed, as *part of* the Gospel. And this is the way he does it. He finds slavery in the Old Testament among the Jews (though he does not tell us its origin nor the circumstances under which it existed), with a distinct enactment governing it. In the New Testament he finds directions to "servants under the yoke" (slaves), instructing them to count their masters worthy of all honor, etc., and not a single sentence nor word repealing or annulling the Jewish law on the subject. Some matters of Jewish law were noticed and annulled, but this most important enactment was not. And all this (he thinks) makes up a chain of proof, running through old and new records, confirming his argument that slavery is a divine institution, *under both dispensations*. Now I wish to state a simple fact to break the links of this chain by a blow: Jew-

ish slavery was extinct at the time of Christ's appearance, and has never been renewed since. There was no need of annulling the act. It was self-annulled, obsolete, dead.

"But why," we are asked, "did not Christ rebuke the prevailing practice (Roman slavery) as he did polygamy and unlawful divorce?" The personal mission of Christ was to the Jews only. "I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." So exclusive were his ministrations in this respect, that even after the day of Pentecost, it required a miracle to convince Peter that the Gentiles were included in the redemption by Christ. Unlawful divorce was practised by the Jews—slavery was not; therefore Christ speaks of the one, and not of the other.

Christianity succeeded Judaism—not heathenism—and the teachings of Christ were to the end to show God's chosen people—the Jews—the marks of difference and superiority between, in all respects, that imperfect, dark, and transient dispensation, which was but the "*shadow of good things to come*," and the full and perfect ministration which is the "*very substance of the things*." He did not intermeddle with Roman state policy, and actually submitted to *unlawful exactions*, and taught his disciples so to do rather than "offend them," or awaken unnecessary opposition. In Matt. 17: 24, etc., we read: "And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute came to Peter and said, Doth not your master pay tribute? He saith, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers? Peter saith to him, Of strangers. Jesus saith, Then are the children *free*; nevertheless, lest we should *offend* them, go thou to the sea and cast a hook, and take the fish that first cometh up: and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee."

Was the paying of the tribute an acknowledgment of the

lawfulness of their demand? By no means. Yet he nowhere speaks against the extortion of the government, nor does he counsel the Jews to resist the payment of the unlawful tax to which they were subjected by Roman law.

Now slavery was in the same relation with the law of tribute; it was an integral part of the policy of the Roman government, and the reason why Christ did not protest against the one, is the same that prevented him from preaching against the other. He came not to reform or overthrow temporal governments, destroy their policy, abrogate their laws, and build his church upon the ruins of their civil institutions. His "kingdom was not of this world." He came to set up a *new* kingdom—a *spiritual*, whose principles of universal charity, of brotherly love, and of entire holiness, were to be sown in the minds and hearts of men, individually and experimentally receiving it, until through the prevalence of its spirit and profession it should become "a power on the earth," and undermine, subvert, absorb, and destroy, by a natural and legitimate process, the evils of political and social policy. It was the "stone cut out of the mountain without hands," which was to spread and fill the whole earth. The evident intention of Mr. Van Dyke, in the use of his argument, is to incorporate Judaism into Christianity, at least so far as its slavery institution and enactments go, and to force us to accept them as essential parts of a great whole, as indeed being "Gospel" in spirit and requirement. We beg leave to be excused from swallowing so large and nauseous a pill. And then in his procedure, he is very coaxing. For instance, from the Old Testament he culls the texts sanctioning slavery of *one kind*, then from the New he digs the fact that the Gospel says nothing against *another kind* (Roman), and then brings us to his own *infallible* conclusion, which we are to take down with our eyes shut, that thereby the Bible establishes a *third* (South-

* Also, when Christ said to the woman taken in adultery, "Neither do I accuse thee," did he "sanction" the act? He simply refused to invest himself with authority belonging to another tribunal.

ern); all these differing widely and essentially (as we have shown) from each other, in origin and characteristics. We have seen that none of the enactments concerning Jewish slavery give any sanction to the iniquity of American slavery. But it is contended that as God never could countenance anywhere what is wrong, it follows that he having sanctioned slaveholding under the Levitical law, sanctions it now; therefore, says Mr. Van Dyke, "slaveholding (now) is not sin." We must demur again and dispute with the Doctor. The premises may be in truth, but the conclusion is false. That bad word "slaveholding" *don't mean the same thing in the different places*, and Mr. Van Dyke *will* persist in ignoring the difference between Jewish slavery and Southern, as to their "SYSTEMS."

To make a fair parallel, it would be necessary for Mr. Van Dyke, or anybody else that may prove ingenious enough, to clearly establish that *Southern* slavery originated in righteous wars, entered upon at the command of God against barbarous nations, that had filled up the cup of their iniquity, and were to be subjected and exterminated; who occupied territory given by promise to another race, which in due time had come to take possession, and whom they resisted; whom having conquered, they then permitted to dwell among them, and, their conquerors denied, by restrictive enactment, the exercise of violence, in compelling servitude, they did "*buy*" them; that the South have not invaded a foreign territory and carried off the unoffending inhabitants; that the slavery of the South is *not* the fruit and legitimate offspring of *man-stealing*.

This is a very hard task, I am aware, even for a devoted minister of a slavery Gospel, whose heart is so gratefully affected with the beauties of that "peculiar institution," that he passionately exclaims in the gushing exuberance of his overwhelming emotions, concerning those that buy and sell men as chattels: "My heart is knit to such men with the sympathy of Jonathan for David. The union between their hearts and mine can never be dissolved. Though my lot be cast in a colder clime, yet in the outgoings of that warm

affection to which space is nothing, I will ever say, Entreat me not to leave thee, for thy people shall be my people, and thy God shall be my God." I trust that some Christian church down South will heed the frantic prayer of this distressed and moaning exile, and give him a "call" where he may live and enjoy all the superabundant sweets of such paradisiacal relations.

But it does not follow that what God sanctioned under the Mosaic dispensation, he sanctioned *now*, or that what was right for a Jew is lawful for a Christian. And although Mr. Van Dyke *asserts* that the authority of the Old Testament, in this matter of slavery, is of equal weight with Gospel requirements, it is mere assertion, and no proof.

The fact is, that many things were allowed under Moses, and made the subjects of special enactments, that are forbidden by the Gospel, or considered by all Christians to be wrong and sinful. It was right for a Jew to exact "eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand." It were sin for a Christian, and He who declared it right in the one case, declares it wrong in the other. The kinsman of a murdered person was constituted the avenger of blood, and could slay the murderer upon sight, without process of law. In a Christian land this is wholly unjustifiable, and annulled by the very *spirit* of the Gospel.

By the law of Moses, in certain cases criminals were stoned to death or burned with fire. Under no circumstances would such methods be adopted by a Christian people, nor looked upon as less than a barbarism and a sin. Polygamy was also extensively practised among the Jews, in both patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations; and at the very time of the giving of the law, was to all intents and purposes as much an "institution" of the Jews, as single marriage is among us. Yet it was not forbidden, nor disallowed by any restrictive enactments, nor limited by any rule or regulation as to the number of wives a man might have. I have marked the quibble by which Mr. Van Dyke attempts to get rid of facing the ready and accumulated proofs of the affirmative of the question. He

says, "If it can be proved that the law of God, as *promulgated by Moses*, did sanction polygamy, I am prepared at once to say that polygamy is in itself no sin." (I earnestly hope that when it is proved he will not hasten to make confession, for he has said bad things enough from the pulpit about slavery, without giving infidels further license to become Mormons by commandment.)

Here is the quibble, "as promulgated by Moses." In the *letter* of the law given at Sinai, polygamy is not found ; therefore (says Mr. Van Dyke) it was not sanctioned. It is a poor rule that will not work both ways. Let us apply this to Mr. Van Dyke's New Testament slavery. He cannot find a positive enactment in the Gospel incorporating it into the Christian economy, as it was incorporated into the Mosaic by Ex. 21 : 5, 6 : "By thine own words shalt thou be condemned."

But polygamy *was supported* by the *civil and ecclesiastical authority* of both the patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations. The patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were specially beloved of God, received commandments directly from Jehovah, and were obedient to him. The Lord said unto Abraham, "Walk before me and be thou perfect," and he was called the "friend of God" for his obedience. And he who so cheerfully offered up his only son a sacrifice to God, would doubtless as readily have dispensed with a plurality of wives, had it been offensive to Jehovah. *He was never so commanded.* All the ways of the heathen around him were forsaken, this was not.

Another proof of Mr. Van Dyke's sophistry, and of the weakness of his position, is, the manner in which he attempts to dispose of this fact by saying: "It is true that some of the patriarchs had more wives than one ; and this fact is recorded. And so David committed murder and adultery ; and this fact is recorded."

There is a most important difference between the record of *this* fact and *this*. David's sins are mentioned with *undisguised abhorrence*, and *with the sentence of punishment attached*; the patriarchs, their wives and children, are mentioned only with

honor. The patriarchs were the high priests of their religion, God's ministers, and received his commands for themselves and families, and their example in this matter contained the clearest evidence of Jehovah's approval. Again, the *whole Jewish nation was born of polygamy*, and the twelve pillars upon which it was built, were the children of many wives, by their father Jacob. And nearly all of these children were given in answer to earnest prayers, and were accepted and acknowledged, in their names and otherwise, as the favor of God. Read Gen. 29 and 30 chaps. The Lord approved and blessed this relation, Gen. 35: 11, &c. "And God said unto Jacob (who was the possessor of four wives), I am God Almighty; be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations (the tribes) shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins." Is there not here evidence enough to satisfy the most skeptical? But, further, it prevailed at the time of the giving of the law. It was not *discountenanced by that law*, but on the other hand it was *recognized* by an express command declaring that he who had two wives should not disinherit the child or children of one wife *not beloved*, in favor of those of another, beloved—Deut. 21: 15, &c.

The true intent and force of this passage Mr. Van Dyke attempts to put aside by a subterfuge. He says: "The nearest approach to such a precept (sanctioning polygamy) is found in Deut. 21: 15, 'If a man have two wives,' he shall do thus and so with the children." "*If* a man have two wives, is that the same as to say, A man *may* have two wives? When the law says, 'If a man smite his servant till he die,' is it the same thing as to sanction the beating of a slave to death?" No, Mr. Van Dyke, it is *not* the same, but there is a very importance difference between the cases. Where it is written, "If a man smite his servant till he die," it *goes right on to say, that he shall be punished*. While, where it is written "if a man have two wives," it does not *condemn* nor *intimate* guilt. And the text does say the same, in substance, as that a man *may* have two wives, for it binds him to acknowledge the children of *both* wives as his legitimate and lawful heirs.

The punctuation of the passage is not where Mr. Van Dyke puts it, "if a man have two wives," stopping here, but "if a man have two wives, *the one beloved and the other hated.*" Another passage, Ex. 21: 10, provides for a plurality of wives.

This is, in brief, the Scripture testimony on this subject. Strong and unequivocal, with not a flaw in the evidence, made by a single word of censure from God, lawgiver, nor prophet. Honored with the blessings of God upon its participators and its fruits and relations, the root and foundation of the Jewish nationality, covered by Jehovah's benediction, and with the authority civil and ecclesiastical of patriarchs and of the law. *It stands upon the record that polygamy was a part of the Jewish system.*

Polygamy was *lawful* in Patriarchs and Jews; but shall it be argued from this that it is right *now*? Mr. Van Dyke may argue thus, for he unfortunately is in that dilemma, but we "have not so learned Christ." Polygamy has not been abrogated nor condemned by express enactment of the Gospel—nor was there need. The *spirit* of Christianity cries out against it as a crime, and the enlightened conscience of all Christendom unanimously proclaims it a crime against God and purity. But it *was not* sinful in the Jews! And slavery is in the same category; but it does not follow that because God regulated and allowed *Jewish* bondage *then*, he necessarily allows it *now*, or would in anywise countenance the same, much less Southern slavery. The idea of advancing Judaism, in respect of authority, to the parallel of Christianity, is simply ridiculous, and in a Christian minister is evidence of unpardonable ignorance or misrepresentation. "How easy," says Mr. Van Dyke, "it would have been for God, if he regarded slaveholding (slavery) as sinful, in those days when his chosen people trembled before Mount Sinai, to have put the stigma of his disapprobation forever upon it."

He did *not* regard such slaveholding as sinful, *in a Jew, at such time.* But *now* even *that* would not be indorsed by the gospel. The fact is ignored by this writer that the two

dispensations differ essentially, not only in mode, but in principle.

The patriarchal and Mosaic were transition stages, leading to a more perfect and complete system of morals and religion. They were dark and crude, not too proceed too far in advance of the limited ability of an ignorant and partially enlightened nation.

Judaism was the green and immature fruit passing through the necessary changes to the ripe; and shall we "set our teeth on edge" by eating sour crabs when we may pluck the ripe and sweet fruit? Nor do the changes and process of ripening carried on through those dispensations, argue that God has changed in nature or attributes, because he laid not upon his first people, ignorant and debased as they were, children in intelligence and moral capacity, in the infancy of their spiritual development and social education, the highest commandments of purity and holiness, found in the New Testament. There are heights of purity which angels perceive, which, were *our* eyes opened to behold, and by commandment were laid upon us to attain, would sink us in despair, at the thought of the impossibility of obedience in our present condition. Yet to such heights glorified "spirits of just men made perfect" soar with delight on easy wing, stripped of the leaden incumbrances of this, our present mode of existence. And if God withheld from the subjects of an opening and immature dispensation the higher requirements of an inward and practical holiness, binding *now* upon the subjects of a full and "glorious ministration," did he dissemble or deceive? The measure of their obedience and required holiness was the command given to *them*.

But is no more required of a Christian than was required of a Jew? Is he to be governed by no higher code of morals? Is the body of Christianity to be deformed by the excrecences of barbarisms which the Jewish nation brought with it out of heathenism, and which, as tumors, were treated with the prescriptions of divine enactments, to prevent their spread, stop their growth, and finally absorb and destroy them?

That such was the tendency and design of those regulations and restrictions concerning both slavery and polygamy, is proved by the undeniable fact that those institutions declined, and continued steadily to grow less and less, until the disintegration of the whole structure was followed by the complete ruin of the "institutions ;" and *slavery and polygamy ceased to exist among the Jews.*

Mr. Van Dyke ought to be content to let "Baal plead for himself," without gratuitously offering his services to incorporate into a holier, purer system an obsolete regulation of ancient Judaism, for which even a Jew will not thank him.

But let us permit the New Testament to give us its views of the character and comparative importance of that transient dispensation, and see whether the intense jealousy of Mr. Van Dyke for their authority now is very laudable in a Christian minister. Peter says, Acts: 15, 10, that Judaism put a "*yoke upon the necks*" of its subjects *which "neither they nor their fathers were able to bear."* But the jealous Doctor is not willing to let Peter settle the question, but would force the "yoke" upon *our* necks.

Paul calls Judaism (2 Cor., c. 3), the "ministration of the letter, which killeth," the "ministration of condemnation and of death ;" that it had "no glory, by reason of the glory (of this dispensation) which excelleth," and declares that *that "ministration is done away."* In the Epistle to the Galatians he again compares the dispensations, which, for the benefit and instruction of such *Jewish Christians* as are on their journey back into the "wilderness" of "beggarly elements," and desire to be informed what will be their state in that land, I will quote. He says, "Abraham had two sons, one by a bondmaid, and the other by a free woman ; these are the two covenants, the one from Mount Sinai that tendeth to bondage ; the other is Jerusalem (the Christian dispensation) which is above, which is free, which is the mother of us all. So, brethren, we are not the children of the bond woman (Jews), but of the free" (Christians). "What saith the Scriptures, *Cast out the bond woman and her son ?*"

So we will, Paul, by the grace of God. We reject Judaism. It has finished its purpose, been discarded by its founder, has passed away, and its institutions all are splintered into a thousand fragments.

And thus we dispose of the vain and unrighteous attempt, to drag the dead and buried laws of a repudiated constitution into the service of Southern slavery.

The arguments which Mr. Van Dyke has drawn from the New Testament in defense of slavery are very few and negative. They are, first, that slavery existed at the time of Christ and his apostles, yet neither he nor they give one distinct and explicit denunciation of it, nor one precept requiring masters to emancipate their slaves. Second, that while idolatry, murder, adultery, theft, and other crimes were denounced, slavery was not. Third, that the apostles give directions to slaves to treat their masters with all honor, thus recognizing the relations. We may well doubt, at the start, the truth and substantiality of any question, or statement, resting hopelessly for support, upon propositions so exclusively negative in their character ; not a natural limb to stand upon.

They *did not ! did not ! did not !* But a "necessity was upon him," for neither he nor any one else can find in all the New Testament a *single positive enactment*, touching slavery and *indorsing it*, as was done under the Jewish dispensation.

Let us *continue* to bear in mind what conclusion it is that the reverend gentleman seeks to force upon our acceptance from these negative premises. Thus, in the time of Christ and his apostles (Roman) slavery existed. It was not denounced by them ; therefore, *Southern* slavery is strictly in accordance with the precepts of the Gospel, sanctioned by the New Testament, and *opposition* to this traffic, system, and relation, is infidelity, and "blasphemes God and his doctrine !"

We briefly notice these points separately. First, slavery existed at the time of Christ and his apostles, yet neither he nor they give one distinct denunciation of it, nor one precept requiring masters to emancipate their slaves.

We have already given the reasons why Christ and his apostles did not meddle with the subject of a heathen institution as slavery then was. His personal mission was exclusively to the Jews, and was devoted to the setting up of his *new spiritual* kingdom.

Mr. Van Dyke well remarks that "slavery was intimately interwoven with the social and civil institutions of the empire."

Slavery existed as the fruits of military conquest, and such appropriation of captives by their conquerors was the law or custom of all nations. It was part of national policy, of established temporal governments, with the ordinances, laws, and policy of which, neither Christ nor his apostles *ever meddled, nor resisted, nor spoke against*, but *always submitted to*, as I have shown in the payment of the unjust tribute money, and taught, in the churches, that all subjects of such governments (while subjects) were to pray for them, give thanks for them, and submit themselves to *every ordinance of theirs*, "for the Lord's sake."

But will any one assert that their example in the paying of the tribute, and their positive injunctions to keep the ordinances, respect the laws, and to pray for their heathen rulers—their not rebuking the many unjust, unholy, and cruel enactments in the code of the nations, was a *sanctioning* of the institution contained in those laws?

Yet it is just on such flimsy negative proof that we are urged to swallow the monstrous proposition that Christ and his apostles *indorsed* slavery. Alas, "if the light that is in us become darkness, how *great* is that darkness." The introduction of a *new* kingdom, an *internal* power, which was made up of such elements as these, "Peace on earth, good-will to (all) men;" "God hath made of one blood all nations that dwell upon the earth;" "As ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them," was the means and method by which God intended to sap the foundations of all cruelty, oppression and wrong, without putting his church and people in hostile

array against civil governments, in the councils of which Christianity exerted no controlling or restraining influence. By the spread of its doctrines, and spirit of peace and good-will to men, it was to prevent aggressive wars, made for conquest and spoil, and which was the *root* of the whole system of slavery existing at the time of Christ. *And it has accomplished this.* Wherever there is found a nation so generally imbued with the faith of the Gospel that on its state papers are written "in the year of grace," or "in the year of our Lord," there the cause and root of slavery exists no more. Slavery has ceased, and property in man, by any right, is denied. The only remaining melancholy and *last* exception this world will ever see, is in a section and minor part of this republic. Human slavery is no part of the body or system of Christianity, is not provided for, nor supervised, nor defined, nor recognized by a *single positive enactment in the Gospel*. And the man who seeks, by plundering the musty records of obsolete Judaism, and taking thence a decree, that died from a total loss of vitality, was dead and buried two thousand years ago, and attempts to incorporate its dry and lifeless bones into the pure and healthy form of Christ's body, that he may baptize sin, sin against God and against humanity, with a Christian name, and take it into the fellowship of the church of God, as a *living* member of Christ's body, and an institution of Christ's care, "as an important and *necessary* means of the redemption of the heathen"—I leave *that* man to the judgment of a holy and righteous Judge, who has said, "Woe to him that putteth darkness for light."

But it is asked, "Why is there not one command to masters to emancipate their slaves?"

In the very next sentence (page 18) Mr. Van Dyke furnishes me with the most satisfactory answer. "The Apostle knew that for the *present*, emancipation would be no *real benefit* to the slave." That is precisely the fact, and what was not a "real benefit," in view of his embarrassing circumstances, he was not required to perform. And this leads me to remark

that it is not instant emancipation for which we contend, but AGAINST SLAVERY AS SIN, in the core and in the root, that we war. Another ray of returning reason in Mr. Van Dyke is evidenced on page 20, where he says, "I incline cordially to the *current opinion of the church* that slavery is not (intended by God) as the final destiny of the slave." Even so.

The second proposition in the New Testament argument for slavery is, that while idolatry, murder, adultery, theft, and other crimes were denounced, slavery was not. The answer to this has been anticipated in the preceding argument, but we have a few words to add. Mr. Van Dyke says (page 16, &c.) : "It is a matter of fact that idolatry and the vices connected with it, were even more intimately interwoven with the social and civil life of the Roman Empire than slavery was." "Did the apostles abstain from preaching against idolatry?" No, and the reason is very obvious. Idolatry was essentially a matter of *spiritual* nature, "interwoven with the social and civil life" it is true, but interwoven as the *spiritual element* of that life, and therefore properly within the legitimate province of the mission of the Gospel. The doctrine of the "one only true and living God" is the beating heart of Christianity, the spring and source of its power. The reception of this belief was the first necessary step to the experience of its power, to believe that "He is."

Idolatry came in contact with this faith : two *spiritual powers* met in opposition. The issue of the conflict was the future and eternal destiny of the souls of men. The subject was beyond the province and reach of civil legislation. It involved the question of obedience to the mandate of the Supreme Ruler, King of kings, and Lord of lords, not revoking the authority he had given to earthly powers, of ruling in temporal things, but proclaiming that "God is a spirit," and that all men must "worship him in spirit and in truth." The Gospel is a *spiritual* force, and wars "*not* against flesh and blood, but against (spiritual) principalities and powers." Such was idolatry. At cost of property and life, the apostles and first disciples con-

tended for (this) "faith once delivered to the saints," and for this faith they could burn. Slavery, a temporal institution, stood in no such opposing relation to the progress of the Gospel. Murder, adultery, theft, and such like crimes, were specially and wholly matters of individual guilt, reprehension and condemnation, proceeding from "within the heart," and proper matters of spiritual supervision.

They were not national or civil institutions, were not protected by civil enactments, but were against the peace of the commonwealth, the safety and happiness of individuals, and contrary even to the government among heathen.

We are further told that the apostles give directions to slaves to "honor their masters," thereby acknowledging the relation. This brings us to a consideration of the text of Mr. Van Dyke's discourse, in the discussion of which this point is involved.

The reverend gentleman's text is taken from 1 Tim. 6 : 1, 5 : "Let as many servants," &c. He quotes no less than five different commentators of as many denominations, to prove that "servants under the yoke" means slaves. Admitted, what use does he make of the fact? Why, we are told that by these directions to such, touching their conduct towards their masters, Paul "intimates in the *strongest* form that he *expects* the relation to *continue*." Wonderful sagacity, and therefore *slavery* is *right*, according to the Gospel—a very *logical* conclusion, very. Paul "intimates" no such thing, and to put such a wholly gratuitous interpretation upon the Apostle's words, is "putting darkness for light."

The Apostle is giving simply plain directions to "servants under the yoke" how to govern themselves "*while in such relation*;" the application of his words extends no further. He is not discussing nor noticing the *contingencies* of that relation. This will not be denied, that *nowhere does the Apostle eulogize the relation, warn the slave nor to seek his liberty*, condemn the attempt or desire to be free, but he positively says to these, "If thou mayest be made free, *use it rather*," Rom. 7, 21.

The text contains just such "wholesome words" as any sound-minded and pious Abolitionist minister would preach to a congregation of slaves, South, should the *Christian* population of that section that are *not* "governed by the fickle and corrupt tribunal of reason and *humanity*," see it to be consistent with their enlightened views on liberty of speech to allow him to preach at all. If a chaplain of a prison should, in a discourse to the prisoners, say, "Count your masters worthy of all honor," would the language be considered as containing an implied reference to the "*continuance* of the relation"? He is speaking of *present* duty growing out of *present* circumstances, and his words would apply with as much force to the man whose term of sentence was to expire in *one* day as to him who was to continue a prisoner for years. The fact that the warden was in a few hours no longer to be his master, did not release him from the obligation to submit in peaceful obedience to the requirement of his *present* subjected condition.

When John the Baptist, upon being asked by the Roman soldiers (Luke 3 : 14), "And what shall we do?" answered, "Be *content* with your wages," did he "intimate in the *strongest form*" that their masters gave them what was "just and right"? They received about three half-pence a day, and were disposed to murmur and rebel because of the insufficiency of their pay. John, who had come as a "preacher of righteousness," and not as a reformer of civil and military misrule, simply gives advice best suited to their case under the circumstances, in view of their utter inability to effect any change to advantage by revolt and commotion. Paul says that what is "*lawful* is not (always) *expedient*."

Peter writes, "Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For *this* is thankworthy, if a man *for conscience* towards God endure grief, suffering *wrongfully*," "for if when ye do *well* and *suffer* for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable to God." Now is this *indorsing wrong*? does *wrong* become *right* because

we are divinely instructed to "*endure it*," and "take it patiently" for "conscience towards God"? Does cheerful, patient submission to the exactions consequent upon occupying a subordinate and servile relation, imply an *acknowledgment* of the *lawfulness* of such relation? Certainly not. And neither do the Apostle's words "*intimate*" in any "form" that "*he expects* the relation to *continue*," when he gives directions to "servants under the yoke" how they are to conduct *while sustaining such relation*.

Let me state a case. A man came to Jesus and requested, "Master, speak to my brother that he divide the inheritance with me." Jesus answered, "Man, who made me a judge or a ruler over you?" Now did the Saviour, by such language, "intimate in the *strongest form*" that the man *unlawfully* claimed a division of the property?

According to the logic of Mr. Van Dyke, the refusing brother should have afterwards grounded his further right of possession on the assumption that the Great Prophet and Law-giver, "intimated in the *strongest form*" that he "*expected*" him "*to continue*" in possession, inasmuch as he denied his brother's claim to any part, by *refusing to adjudge in the matter*. Were he *unlawfully* seized of the estate (so Mr. Van Dyke's logic would run) and detained from his brother that which in justice belonged to him, the Saviour would certainly have embraced so favorable an opportunity of denouncing the wrong-doer who held his possessions by fraud. Whereas, the truth is, that the answer of Christ bore only upon the matter of the unlawfulness of the man's contemplated mode of redress; which was the substitution in the place of the lawful civil jurisdiction of a judgeship, which, however righteous, and according to truth should be its decisions, would have been a usurpation of authority, and an unwarrantable interference (according to Christ's precepts) with the prerogatives of a regularly constituted government, the lawfulness, or at least expediency of which, was acknowledged by Him, who, by his inspired apostles, wrote, "submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for

the *Lord's sake*" (not because it was "just and right"), "whether it be unto kings as supreme, or unto governors."

Mr. Van Dyke is rather unfortunate in quoting Dr. Adam Clarke, who, in his comment on the reverend gentleman's text, and which comment he quotes to sustain his forced interpretation and bearing of this passage, takes the precise views we have presented. "The word *douloi* (servants) here means slaves converted to the Christian faith; and by *despotai* (masters), we are to understand the heathen masters of those Christianized slaves. Even these *in such circumstances and under such domination*, are commanded to treat their masters with all honor and respect, that the name of God, by which they were called, and the doctrine of God, Christianity, which they had professed, might not be blasphemed, might not be evil spoken of, in consequence of their improper conduct." "The *civil state* in which a man was before his conversion is not altered *by that conversion*, nor does the grace of God absolve him from any *claims* which either the state or his neighbor may have on him. All these outward things remain unaltered" (by such conversion). This is, indeed, a "clear exposition," and contains "good doctrine, wholesome words." It teaches that "*two wrongs do not make a right*;" that the conversion of slaves was not designed to inaugurate rebellion against civil authority, and "make bad worse," by raising them against their masters because they had become "baptized disciples."

This, certainly, would have been a blaspheming of that holy name and doctrine which they professed, which taught humility, to "resist *not* evil," to "endure grief, suffering wrongfully," to be "patient under affliction." Whatever "*claims*" a state may have upon us, we are bound by the law of Christ to fulfill, and we are to yield obedience to its law "*while under such domination*." But does such requirement deprive us of the use of all peaceable and righteous means to be released from such "domination"? Does St. Paul or Dr. Clarke, in either text or comment, or in any other of their writings, speak against the exercise of such "*inalienable right*"? 'Tis Paul's advice

to "servants under the yoke," "If thou mayest be free, use it rather." The mode and time of release from unjust civil requirements will be indicated by the favoring circumstances of our position, and by prudently and wisely following the intuitions of enlightened conscience. Suffering wrong does not make lawful, much less expedient, *all* means we may find at hand to effect a release; "we are not to do evil that good may come." The *right* to liberty, and the use of *improper* means to obtain it, are considerations vastly differing in many respects.

The conscience of enlightened humanity in its infallible intuitions, sits in stern judgment against human bondage, and condemns it. And with the advancement of the light, doctrines, and spirit of Christianity has been the quickening of its perceptions and sensibility. Where civil domination has been too strongly opposed to allow its expression, it has waited until "in the course" and changes "of human events," it has made its way into the halls of legislation, where it could speak out, and had power and room to act, when it has by "constitutional means" changed odious laws, and "proclaimed liberty to the captive." And this it ever has and *ever will do*, wherever it possesses the lawful authority, despite the clamor and protest of the upholders of wickedness and "pleaders for Baal."

To-day an amazing spectacle is presented to the eyes of the world. Every Christian nation of the earth, inspired by the quickening influence of conscience, enlightened by the Word of God, from which Mr. Van Dyke takes his text, and professes to bring his proofs in support of uncompensated human chattel slavery, are washing their hands from all its defilements, and purging their possessions from the curse; while in this land, which has boasted to the world of its foundations of liberty, of its establishment in the principles of "*equal* and *exact* justice to *all* men;" here, where that "*great light* of the world," the Bible, has thrown out upon us all around its "healing rays," "bringing men to a knowledge of the truth," concerning our duty to aid in the lifting up of the degraded of our kind to the

true level of redeemed humanity, professed Christians and Christ's ministers are giving over the Bible and the religion of our fathers to the ridicule of infidels, by earnest attempts to prove that this sin, from which all Christian nations, except one shameful exception, have washed their hands, is indorsed by divine sanction, and should be sustained as an "institution" of "*humanity*" and *Christian philanthropy*! "Woe to them that put bitter for sweet, that say of evil it is good."

I now wish to offer a few remarks upon an epistle of the New Testament, frequently dragged into this discussion in support of the doctrine that the apostles supported the system of slavery, the Epistle to Philemon. And I offer this epistle as the basis of a fugitive slave law, at this distracting time of compromises.

This letter cannot be employed to favor the return of fugitive slaves *against their consent*. Because it is, first, *an exceptional case*, founded on the peculiar circumstances arising out of the *Christian* relations of the parties. Philemon was an eminent and devoted Christian, the intimate friend of Paul, and fully confided in by him to act in the matter according to the Apostle's dictation.

Second, it was an act *in which the fugitive concurred*, a voluntary surrender on his part, evidenced satisfactorily by his being *the bearer of Paul's letter*. Third, it was exclusively a *Christian transaction*, done without an appeal to, or through the intervention of the legal authorities—a *church matter*. (And yet men tell us that the Church ought not to meddle with slavery.) Fourth, if this exceptional case argues the sanctioning of slavery by the Apostle, by the same rule and process circumcision becomes a part of the Gospel dispensation, for *Paul circumcised Timothy*. And Jewish ceremonial purification is also incorporated into the New Testament by his example. Paul underwent the process in the temple during seven days, the term prescribed by Moses. Yet, in one of his epistles, he says to Christians, "If ye be circumcised, Christ availeth you nothing." Fifth, Onesimus was not returned as a fugitive

slave, nor was he sent back to his former master to *continue in the relation of* "servant under the yoke."

Paul writes to Philemon, "I beseech thee for *my son*, thou therefore receive him that is mine own bowels, whom I *would have retained* (having the power), but without thy mind would I do nothing ; that thou shouldst receive him forever, not now as a *servant*, but ABOVE A SERVANT, *a brother beloved* especially to me, but *how much more to thee*, both *in the flesh* and in the Lord. If thou count ME A PARTNER, RECEIVE HIM AS MYSELF."

We may safely trust to the provisions of a fugitive slave law based on the principle and *practice* of the above epistle.

I have a few words to say upon the opinion which Mr. Van Dyke expresses concerning some ministers, of whose larger congregations he seems to be jealous and whom he wishes to get off to Harper's Ferry to dispose of summarily, and to give them opportunity to show proper and full proof of their courage. Abolitionists, doubtless, differ much in opinion as to the manner in which slavery should be disposed of. Agreement in principle is not always followed by concert of action. But it does not follow that because one man "goes to practice the preaching" (of abolitionism) at "Harper's Ferry," in the face of the law's terrors, he is "more consistent" or "more heroic" than he who, occupying his divinely-appointed place in the sacred desk in the city of Brooklyn, preaches the same doctrine (that slavery is sin), "in brave words, amid applauding multitudes."

'Tis mean to taunt a man with cowardice because he does not step out of his *lawful place*, to take an unlawful, unchristian position, or seek to do good in an unlawful manner. We venture that if the Rev. Mr. Van Dyke will give a pledge on behalf of the Christian slaveholders of the South, or any part of it, that the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher shall be allowed to preach his sentiments against slavery, as publicly and as undisturbed as he himself was allowed to utter his slavery discourse in the midst of a city of "infidels and rabid abolitionists," it will not be long before the opportunity will be em-

braced by him and many others. Mr. Van Dyke walks the streets of a city filled with "infidel, Bible-rejecting abolitionists," and preaches among them his extreme pro-slavery doctrines, without a fear to raise a hair of his head. And he knows that this right and privilege, granted to him here, and for his protection in which, the whole civil and military force of the country would, by *law*, be granted, Mr. Beecher, or any other honest American citizen, would be denied and forbidden to lisp a word upon the subject of anti-slavery sentiment among the "Christian slaveholders" of the South, under the penalty of being deprived of his liberty, tarred and feathered, and put in danger of his life! Alas for the Christian gentleness of the spirit of the "*divine* institution"—"by their fruits ye shall know them." Is it the only satisfactory proof of courage to put one's head in a hungry lion's mouth? It was the suggestion of divine wisdom to Moses "to take the serpent by the *tail*," and it is neither cowardice nor "carnal wisdom" that constrains good men to follow this wholesome suggestion, and keep away from the venomous fangs of Southern slave-power, for at last it "*biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.*"



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 011 898 620 9